



(Photo courtesy of 172nd SBCT)

Stryker Troops Stock School

An Iraqi national policeman and Sgt. Robin Roberts, from Peru, Ind., assistant operations sergeant for Multi-National Division - Baghdad's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, based out of Fort Wainwright, Alaska, share smiles with local children during a humanitarian assistance distribution at the Khadra Neighborhood Advisory Council Nov. 11. Approximately 70 boxes of school supplies for five area primary schools and 1000 boxes of food for local families were distributed along with toys for children.

Deadlines Approaching for Holiday Mail

By Pfc. M. Benjamin Gable
7th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Time is running out for Soldiers have only a few days remaining to send home holiday packages so they can be received by loved ones before Dec. 25, Christmas Day.

There are two separate dates to remember for those who wish to make the

holiday mailing cut-off. Mail sent by means of space available must be turned in by Nov. 19, while mail sent priority has a cut-off date of Dec. 4.

Soldiers need to know some basic information in order to ensure the mailing process will be completed.

Always make sure the address includes the name, full address, city, state and correct zip code. Soldiers should also

include the return address in the top left corner of the package. This address should include the Soldier's first and last name, Army Post Office and corresponding unit number. The address needs to be neatly written to ensure delivery.

There are ways to ensure the packages

See **Package** Page 4

The Inseparable, Now Separated

By Sgt. Nicole Kojetin
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - Everyone misses their family, when separated because of a deployment, but for one 1st Cavalry Division Soldier leaving home was a little more difficult. From the first spark of life in Shreveport, La., they were together. They came into the world together. They wore the same clothes through middle school, and dress alike as adults, having joined the Army together.

But for the first time in 22 years, Spc. Latasha Gates is not within walking distance of her twin sister, Natasha.

"It's hard sometimes," she said. "I am used to just turning my head to tell her something. Now, I have to call, and it isn't quite the same."

She laughed as she spoke about their secret language,



(Photo by Sgt. Nicole Kojetin, 1st Cav. Div.)
Spc. Latasha Gates, a Shreveport, La., native troubleshoots a laptop computer Nov. 10.

which wasn't anything crazy like clicks and made-up words.

"I can tell what she is thinking just from a look on her face," she said.

The Gates have been a tight-knit family from the start.

If fact, they joined the Army to help support their mom.

"This way, we don't have to worry," Latasha said. "If she needs something, we can help."

The Gates twins lived together at Fort Hood and through their first tour in Iraq working as division automation specialists fixing problems with networks, computers, faxes, and printers. They lived, worked and hung out with each other. For many siblings, that would have been a disaster.

"We've always been really close," Latasha said. "Sure, we have our fights, but they usually resolve quickly. Nobody has ever moved out."

But with the news a little over a year ago that Natasha was expecting a little girl, they know that their rhythms would change with deployment.

At first, Latasha didn't

want to leave, especially knowing that she couldn't help her sister with the new addition to their family. But she knows she will see her twin again soon and is excited to start receiving pictures as her niece grows.

She is looking forward to growing herself with this new independence.

"I am hoping to get as much college finished as possible and to get my E-5 (promotion) in December," she said.

The twins are planning to continue to live their lives side-by-side and consider each other in their decisions. So far, the plan is to get out of the Army in about a year and a half, return to their hometown and finish college.

Though their future plans may change, one thing is for sure: they may physically get separated, their hearts will always be together.

Arabic Phrase of the Day

afwan.

**Defined: Sorry.
Pardon me.**

Iraq 3-Day Forecast



Today

**High: 70
Low: 45**



Tomorrow

**High: 73
Low: 48**



Monday

**High: 66
Low: 45**

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Volunteers Fill 10,000 USO Care Packages

By Amanda Kim Stairrett
Fort Hood Herald

Even though their husbands had already received their USO Care Packages and left for Iraq, Sherry Amagliani and Linda Williams were at a West Fort Hood hangar Nov. 1, helping to stuff 10,000 of the care packages.

"I feel closer to my husband when we do this," Amagliani said.

Amagliani's and Williams' husbands deployed with the 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Air Cavalry Brigade in mid-October.

This event hits home for a lot of the volunteers, said Chad Best, program manager for Operation USO Care Package and an eight-year Army veteran who served two tours in Iraq.

"We can't bring the soldier home, and the holiday season is rough, and we want to bring home to them," he said.

Jack Daniel Distillery and USO hosted a "stuffing party" at Fort Hood last week, one of two this year.

The first was Oct. 10 at Fort Gillem, Ga. A third is planned in the Western United States for early 2007.

USO has sent out more than 960,000 care packages since 2001, Best said. The program started in 2001 after the post-Sept. 11 anthrax scare, which discontinued send-



(Photos by Spc. Sheena Williams, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

A volunteer stuffs a care package that Soldiers receive before departing Fort Hood in West Fort Hood hangar Nov. 1.

ing letters and packages addressed to "Any Service Member."

Organizers set up two assembly lines and more than 100 volunteers lined the tables and sang along and danced to energetic music as they packed items such as lip balm, beef jerky and playing cards into plastic resealable bags. It took a little more than 30 seconds for a bag to make it to the end of the line, where it was packed into a cardboard box.

Wendy Fil, wife of Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil Jr., the 1st Cavalry's commander, was at the end of one of the assembly lines, attaching USO labels to each box of care packages.

Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey also made a special stop at the party. Wearing a III Corps hat, he sang along to "Whoop There It Is" as he made his way to the end of an assembly line where he helped fill boxes with care packages.

One of the volunteers on the line was Bonita Roesler, wife of Spc. Justin Roesler, a 1st Cavalry soldier who deployed Oct. 1. Each participant was given a white T-shirt to commemorate the event and Roesler's was covered in iron-on photos of her husband.

The soldiers are in Iraq risking their lives and she wanted to show her support, she said, plus she wanted to spice up her T-shirt.

"I like to brag about my husband because I'm so proud of him," she added.

Volunteers, soldiers and family members were treated to a barbecue and performance by country music singer Craig Morgan, who is a former Army Ranger, after the stuffing party. Morgan, his crew and band members also participated in the stuffing party.

Mike Rogers, the band's drummer, said participating in events like this and performing for the troops makes him feel like he's doing his part to help.

It is emotional working alongside family members, Morgan said.

It helps them because they get a good feeling knowing that they are doing something to benefit the troops.

He has traveled to the Middle East for the last five years to perform for U.S. troops and had advice for them: hold your heads high.

"Maintain pride in knowing what you're doing is right and know we appreciate it," he said.



Women work on packing 10,000 care packages for Soldiers at in a West Fort Hood hangar Nov. 1.

Trigger Pull:**O-State Hater Still Picks Buckeyes to Win****By Master Sgt. Dave Larsen
& Pfc. Ben Gable**

This weekend the number one team in the nation, the Ohio State Buckeyes, battle the Michigan Wolverines in Columbus, Ohio for top honors in the Bowl Championship Series standings and another year of bragging rights.

The senior member of this two-headed columnist is a Milwaukee-born 'Cheesehead' and a long-time Big Ten fan. The junior partner is an Atlanta native and a die-hard 'Dawgs' fanatic.

The two are together in this column, but irreversibly split in their predictions for this weekend's "big" game in college football.

"Being new at the prognostication game, I decided to let Pfc. Gable get in on my column and write it in third person," Larsen noted. "He doesn't know squat about sports, but since I haven't picked a winner yet this season, I decided to give him a shot."

"Go Dawgs! The number one team in the nation is still the Georgia Bulldogs," Gable said, despite their four losses in the Southeastern Conference, bringing Larsen's assessment of his sporting knowledge into crystal clarity. "I'm not a fan of the Buckeyes, but I think they're going to come away with the win."

"My Badgers have gone through their Big Ten schedule with only one blemish on their record - to Michigan, so I've got to go with the Wolverines," Larsen said. "Besides, they didn't lose to a patsy like Florida this



(Photo by Sgt. Nicole Kojetin, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

Local sports buffs Master Sgt. Dave Larsen (left) and Pfc. Ben Gable square off their football views.

year!" ESPN is picking Ohio State to take the game, 28-20. However, former Michigan great, coach Bo Schembechler passed away on the eve of the game, making this match even more emotionally charged than it already is, as the top-ranked team in the nation squares off with number two.

The game is set to air on ABC at 11:30 p.m. here in Baghdad. Check the AFN listings.

Taking a look at NFL match-ups this weekend, the two columnists remain at odds over a slate of professional pigskin picks. Here's what they consider to be the best games this weekend.

Atlanta (5-4) at Baltimore (7-2)

"The Falcons will win this one because they play to the level of the competition they face," Gable opined. "Besides, they're coming off a heart-breaking loss and the heart of the Ravens' defense, Ray Lewis, is out."

"Even without their all-pro middle line-

backer, the Ravens will give Michael Vick 'happy feet,' force him out of the pocket where all-pro safety Ed Reed will clean his clock!" Larsen countered.

New England (6-3) at Green Bay (4-5)

"Sure, Tom Brady plays in a cold-weather climate, but this is the 'Frozen Tundra,' baby!" Larsen began. "Brett Favre and Donald Driver are on a roll right now, so I pick the Pack in a shoot-out."

"Every sports expert is picking the Pats to beat the Pack, no matter where they play," Gable said. "It's a no-brainer ... unless you're a 'homer!'"

Indianapolis (9-0) at Dallas (5-4)

"While I don't expect the Colts to challenge the '72 Dolphins and their perfect season, it won't be the 'Boys who take them down this weekend," Larsen said. "Tony Romo is no Peyton Manning, and Terry Glenn is no Reggie Wayne ... let alone a Brandon Stokley. The Cowboys will take out Marvin Harrison and the Colts will take away T.O. What's left over spells a win for the Colts."

"I can't believe we're actually agreeing on something," Gable said. "Terrell Owens no longer has the bite to match his bark. He's overrated. The Cowboys defense will be no match for the run-and-gun offense of the Indianapolis Colts."

Think you have what it takes to beat our resident "experts?" Send in your NFL and college football prognostications (that's 'picks' for you tailgaters) to the Daily Charge at david.j.larsen@mind-b.army.mil.

Go Packers! Sick 'em, Dawgs!

Post Detachment Provides 2 Pieces Free Mail**Package**

From Page 1

arrive at their intended destination, said Sgt. Jerome Iese, a technical inspector and register noncommissioned officer in charge with the 342nd Post Company Detachment 4, 4th Infantry Division.

"Soldiers can have track-

ing numbers put on outgoing mail when they send it through the United Parcel Service station," he said. "This way, it can be tracked online and you can know where it is at all times."

Free mail is offered here, but there are rules that must be followed.

Soldiers can send mail items with up to two pieces of paper in it free through their

nearest post office or mailroom. This includes personal correspondence, such as letters, pictures or digital video discs. The package, however, may not weigh more than 13 ounces upon shipment. As long as the specifications are met, there is no limit to how many pieces of mail a Soldier can send.

"You can send as much free mail as you wish," Iese said.

However, Iese said there are items that may not be sent in the mail.

These include lighters, ammunition, ammo and agricultural items such as dirt and sand, to name a few.

In order to ensure package reach their intended destination, on time, Soldiers are encouraged to follow the guidance of the postal service.